
From: Lindenstone, Diane
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To: EPS.MailList
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...*NewsLinks* *Special* *Edition*

A Web-based newsletter for the staff of Everett Public Schools

Jan. 5, 2010 *Special Edition* (*NewsLinks* articles are now [archived on DocuShare](#))

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT – Welcome back! A quick look at the upcoming year, levy information sessions and information about technology cost-savings and changes, and details about the [Jan. 10 memorial for Carol Erickson](#).

Welcome back, and Happy New Year! I hope that your holiday break was restful and energizing and full of joyful time with those dear to you. Sue and I cherished the time we were able to spend together, and with family and close friends. Just being with family and friends reminds me of how blessed we are in this community, and in our profession. May your new year be rich with the rewards of your work with students.

The remaining six months of the school year are shaping up to be full of challenges and opportunities.

- You will be learning more this month about the results of the Center for Educational Excellence surveys conducted in November and how that information will help us continually improve student learning – in our district, in our individual schools, and in our many professional learning communities.
- In mid-January, you and all residents of the district will receive the January issue of *Everett Schools*, featuring a number of community partnerships that are helping us achieve the mission of *each* student learning to high standards. It will showcase good work happening in the district and thank and encourage residents to continue the history of support and partnership with schools and the district.
- The recently appointed [Fiscal Advisory Council](#) met for the first time in December and has a weekly schedule of meetings throughout January and February (The [Everett Herald](#) wrote about the council over winter break). The [Equity and Access Advisory Council](#) will begin meeting in January, and will be an ongoing and valuable group to help inform our work for many years. As their work progresses, watch for updates in *NewsLinks* and on the Web. In addition, I plan to start the [Strategic Planning Council's](#) work this month, and will be sharing more about opportunities for you to be involved in those efforts over the next 18 months.
- In February, your school board and I will travel with our high school ASB presidents to the Washington State School Directors' Association's (WSSDA) day with legislators and

have a chance to tell our story to those who make funding decisions. The district has not routinely involved students in this trek to Olympia, and I very much look forward to what the team and the legislators will learn from the students during our visit.

- The levy committee continues its work to help the public understand the importance of the two levies which will be on the ballot Feb. 9. I am continually grateful to the scores of you who volunteer time in that effort, and I know the levy committee, school board, and others appreciate your volunteer time as well. Because many of you have asked for a time to learn about the levies, we have scheduled a number of staff presentations in January as listed below. Please check for a time or location that is convenient for you. If you are not able to attend, please check out the [levy information](#) on the district Web site or call the communications department at extension 4040 if you have levy questions or suggestions about how to convey levy information to staff and the public.

Staff	Date	Time	Location
Maintenance	Jan. 6	7:30 a.m.	Staff room
Cascade HS	Jan. 6	2:15 p.m.	Band room
Center	Jan. 7	9:30 a.m.	C1/C2
Heatherwood	Jan. 11	3 p.m.	Library
Evergreen MS	Jan. 12	2:15 p.m.	Library
Gateway MS	Jan. 19	3 p.m.	Library
HM Jackson HS	Jan. 20	2:15 p.m.	Library
Eisenhower MS	Jan. 25	3 p.m.	Library

Technology cost-saving efficiencies to watch for

Later this week, the information systems and technology department will begin shutting down student computers at 6 p.m. As you may be aware, for almost a year, we have been automatically shutting down all computers in the district at 9 p.m. each day. These automatic, districtwide shutdowns are saving electricity and thus utility costs. They are also an example of responsible energy consumption that many of you are helping students understand each day. If you need a student lab to be open past 6 p.m., the information systems department asks that you make that request through your principal or supervisor so that the machines can be left on for your use.

You can also help the conservation effort by remembering to shut down your own computers at the end of your workday. The 9 p.m. automatic shutdown turns off machines that have been left on, but as you know, each machine turned off earlier than 9 p.m. by a staff member is also saving energy and energy costs.

Later this month, the district will begin phasing out the long-standing practice of “blocking” all e-mails with specific words that could be associated with a threat. In the years that this has been our practice, the filtering protocol has indeed intercepted a handful of worrisome messages and enabled the district to intervene appropriately. However, the process of reading, clearing and then forwarding thousands of messages over the last few years has consumed hundreds of hours of staff time. We have also taken countless phone calls from parents and staff sending or seeking messages delayed because an innocent phrase in context includes a

word the filtering system considered potentially threatening. In these times of budget cuts and reduced staffing, we can maintain safety and prevent e-mail harassment of students and staff by giving everyone clear instructions about what to do if such an e-mail lands in your inbox, and then responding appropriately to threats.

Before we completely lift the e-mail blocking filter, we will establish a set of protocols for you to follow should you receive a threatening e-mail. Staff and student safety is a high priority for the district, and I believe it is very important that you have clear information and direction about what to do if you feel there is a threat to that safety arriving in an e-mail. Watch for those protocols coming from your supervisor or principal.

This is also a good time to remember that we do have both a phone safety tip line (425-385-5050) and an e-mail safety tip address (safetytip@everettsd.org). Both can be used by students, staff or community to report any issue the caller or e-mail user feels threatens safety at school. The phone is completely anonymous; we do not reveal the e-mail address of those who send an e-mail to the safety tip e-mail address.

January 10 memorial for Carol Erickson

Many of you knew Carol who worked in the district for 35 years – most recently at North Middle School. Sadly, she passed away on Dec. 24 – at a time when many of you may not have been in the area to learn of the loss.

[Full details of the memorial](#) planned for her and of her contributions to the community are on the Web.

With the availability of Web-based information and using e-mail notices, we will endeavor to notify you of the passing of longtime district staff. In the past that has not always been easily communicated because of printing delays. Please know that we may not always receive the information quickly enough to convey it to you in a timely fashion. However, we will do our best with information available to share this important information about members of our education community.

Your health is important

Just before winter break, the Snohomish Health District announced that FREE H1N1 vaccines are now available. Full details are included in the [Dec. 15 issue of NewsLinks](#). Personally, I thought this is a great service and a good deal, made an appointment and received the vaccine over break. We've also recently learned that Safeway has H1N1 flu shots available for just \$15 if you are not able to make an appointment with the Health District.

New Year's Wish

As we prepare for the challenges that confront us in the coming months, I try always to keep in mind the importance of the work we do together. Because of your professionalism and commitment to our mission, you and your colleagues create a world of possibilities for children. While I might wish for many things for you this year, I believe that wishing you good health and happiness, and the incomparable rewards of introducing your students to new worlds of opportunity, is the very best hope I can hold for you. Say "hi" or wave when you see me in your school or at your worksite. I certainly look forward to seeing you as we embrace the new year together.

Dr. Gary Cohn

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From www.everett.k12.wa.us, sign up for [InTouch](#) e-mail messages; choose the school information you want most.